

Lincoln Park Neighborhood Plan Advisory Group
Summary Meeting minutes
September 5, 2002

Members present: Wilma Bell, Merion Green, Lucinda Hall, Berneice Howard, Tolulope Odunlami, Maude Smith Kilgo, Anita Summerour, Geraldine Evans Wilson

Staff: Chris Bartlett, Mayra Bayonet, Randy Clay, Jim Wasilak

Opening Remarks/Administrative Items

Tolu Odunlami opened the meeting, and Jim Wasilak noted that the roster is available for everyone to take home. He suggested that the group may want to discuss how they want to interface with the East Rockville Neighborhood Plan Advisory Group. East Rockville has extended an open invitation for any member of the Lincoln Park Neighborhood Plan Advisory Group to attend their meetings, which are held on the opposite Thursdays from Lincoln Park. They had been meeting in the Croydon Park Pumphouse, but will be relocating to City Hall. Wilma Bell stated that she felt that the Lincoln Park group probably needs to meet a few times before meeting with East Rockville. Jim stated that there are a couple of ways to approach the joint meeting, either through a subcommittee liaison or joint meeting. Tolu stated that he would like to attend the East Rockville meetings. Anita Summerour stated that staff could facilitate a meeting between the two chairs, and that it was a good idea to observe the East Rockville meetings but not comment. Wilma Bell stated that the East Rockville group should not be invited to observe until the Lincoln Park group has gotten farther along. Two members of the Group noted that they did not receive their mailing.

Master Plan Background

Jim discussed the components of a Master Plan, using the State of Maryland requirements and the existing Neighborhood Plan as an example. Master Plans are intended to serve as a guide for public and private actions dealing with the neighborhood, often related to development but also to other areas to public facilities. An important component is the vision statement or series of goals that articulate the desired future conditions in the neighborhood. This forms the basis for the objectives and policies that are in the plan text. Jim pointed out that the formulation of a goal statement(s) in the beginning of the planning process can be a point of reference during the process, and can be modified during the process as well. Another important is the Land Use Plan, which determines the future land use pattern for the community and its surroundings. Berneice Howard questioned whether there is additional land available in the community, to which Jim stated that the property owned by the Board of Education could be available if that facility is relocated. Wilma noted that the WINX property is also a potential for redevelopment, and that the Plan could also consider the Lincoln Terrace and Lenmore Apartments as a potential site for home ownership opportunities. Jim also noted that those properties could also be targeted for revitalization to improve their conditions. Anita Summerour stated that the Washington Gas property would probably not be redeveloped because of the existing gas facilities, and that the Plan should focus on the Stonestreet corridor, Lenmore Apartments and Lincoln Terrace for redevelopment areas. Wilma Bell noted that the WINX property does have

residential development potential so it should be considered as well. Jim noted that any intense use of the WINX property requires City water and sewer service, and requires annexation of the property. Wilma also noted that the residents on Ashley Avenue have serious concerns about its redevelopment.

Jim noted that another important element of the land use plan is parks facilities. Jim pointed out that public facilities that serve the community is also a critical component of a Master Plan. The Plan should also include a transportation component that determines the character of the road, pedestrian, transit and bike facilities serving the community. Jim noted that in terms of land use, the Plan can also address the character of land uses in terms of setbacks, landscaping and site design. Tolu questioned what should be the setbacks next to the gas property. Jim stated that it might be a policy for a buffer on the Washington Gas property might be appropriate to deal with the future plans for the site. Anita questioned how close the gas company facilities are to North Horners Lane. Jim clarified the difference between setback and buffer, with setbacks being required on each property based on each zone and buffer areas requiring some degree of separation with other means such as berms and landscaping. Wilma questioned when the industrial zoning on Frederick Avenue came in to existence, and Jim responded that he would find out. Jim also noted that some of the zoning may have come in to being when the City implemented a Master Plan for the Stonestreet area in the late 1950s.

Jim explained that the new Land Use Map can lead to changes in the zones that apply to a property. As a result of the new Neighborhood Plan and its recommended zoning changes, a Map Amendment would be filed to formally and legally change the zoning on a property. Jim noted that several zones may apply to a land use category, such as multifamily, and that the Plan would recommend the appropriate zone. Berneice Howard questioned whether zones could be changed at will, to which Jim responded that there are specific processes that need to be followed now. This contrasts with how changes in zones came about in the past. Berneice also questioned the need for the commercial buildings being constructed if there are no businesses in them.

Other items that could be included in the Plan are a housing element, community renewal or revitalization element, and an environmental element including open space. Merion Green noted that perhaps the Plan should focus more on getting new housing rather than open space, given the fact that the community is mostly built. Wilma Bell noted that new open space should be usable and not leftover space, similar to the Memory Walk pocket park. Jim noted that the Recreation and Parks Department is looking at creating new parkland in established communities which are deficient in the amount of parkland. Another aspect of Master Plans is the adequacy of public facilities, such as stormwater management facilities and sewer and water service. As new development occurs, the City will have to ensure that adequate service is provided. Tolu Odunlami questioned whether there were any concrete proposals for the School Board property, to which Jim responded no, but noted that the Master Plan should also include an implementation component that determines the timing and extent of actions to be taken by the City and other public entities.

Visioning Exercise

The Group reviewed the Goals and Objectives found on page 14-15 of the 1984 Lincoln Park Neighborhood Plan.

Housing

The Group agreed that the existing Housing Goal should be divided up into a series of three goals, with an emphasis on housing opportunities for a mix of incomes, as follows:

- Provide housing opportunities for residents with a range of incomes;
- Promote homeownership opportunities for residents who are or will be owner-occupants;
- Protect the residential character of the neighborhood from nonresidential encroachment and nonconforming land uses

Several objectives were also identified, including:

- Ensure absentee landlords maintain their properties;
- Encourage property owners and landlords to monitor undesirable activities to ensure stable households in the residential community;

Public Services

The Community Services and Facilities goal and objectives were renamed to be public services, to be distinguished from the delivery of social services in the community by the City's Department of Neighborhood and Community Services. These include water, sewer and trash collection as well as the Community Center. The Group agreed that the community should not be the focal point for food drives and other social service programs. The Group agreed to the following goal:

- The neighborhood should continue to receive all City services that are available to all City neighborhoods.

The Group stated that the Plan should be clear about what services are desired, to be included in the objectives, and that the Lincoln Park Community Center should not be a focal point of community services delivery. The Group agreed that some income information would be helpful. Several objectives were also identified, including:

- Maintain and enhance the following services important to the neighborhood: Neighborhood resources, community facilities,
- The neighborhood should receive an appropriate level of social services, but should not be a target for those services.

Transportation

The Group agreed to rename the former Circulation goal as Transportation, and rewrote it as follows:

- Establish circulation patterns and opportunities, including vehicular, bicycle, pedestrian and public transit, which ensure and protect the residential nature of the Lincoln Park neighborhood.

The Group agreed to the following objectives:

- Provide Ride-On service as a smaller, neighborhood-friendly service;
- Restrict non-residential cut-through traffic;
- Enforce existing traffic laws and restrictions to reduce the negative effects of traffic on the neighborhood.

Land Use and Zoning

The Group agreed to the following goal for land use and zoning:

- Maintain and enhance Lincoln Park as a stable and secure residential neighborhood.

The Group agreed to the following objectives:

- For redevelopment areas, such as North Stonestreet, Ashley Avenue (WINX), Frederick Avenue industrial area and North Horners Lane industrial zoning should be eliminated;
- Encourage vacant or redevelopable land to become residential at the earliest opportunity;
- Ensure institutional uses, including schools, shelters and churches, are compatible with the character of the community;
- Increase the amount of parkland serving the neighborhood.

Next Steps

The Group agreed that the next meeting would be held on September 19 at 7:00 p.m. in the Lincoln Park Community Center.

/rjw